

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

211028Z Feb 03

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 KATHMANDU 000311

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SA/INS AND DS/IP/NEA
STATE ALSO PLEASE PASS USAID/DCHA/OFDA
USAID FOR ANE/AA GORDON WEST AND JIM BEVER
MANILA FOR USAID/DCHA/OFDA
LONDON FOR POL/REIDEL
TREASURY FOR GENERAL COUNSEL/DAUFHAUSER AND DAS JZARATE
TREASURY ALSO FOR OFAC/RNEWCOMB AND TASK FORCE ON TERRORIST
FINANCING
JUSTICE FOR OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL/DLAUFMAN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PTER](#) [CASC](#) [PGOV](#) [NP](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON NEPAL'S MAOIST INSURGENCY, FEB 15-21

SUMMARY

1. The Kathmandu press has reported that an informal meeting has been set for February 24 between Government of Nepal (GON) representatives and Maoist negotiators. Krishna Bahadur Mahara and Dinnath Sharma, members of the Maoist negotiating team, reportedly are in the capital to meet with political party leaders. Minister of Physical Planning and Works and government-appointed coordinator for the peace talks with the Maoists, Narayan Singh Pun, promised that a code of conduct would be finalized and made public in the near future. Maoist leader Prachanda says he has ordered his comrades to stop extorting money. Minister Pun said that those who had committed atrocities in dealing with Maoists and civilians would face war crime tribunals. Two children were killed by Maoist gunfire. The insurgents have continued their mass meetings and declared they are ready to take up arms again if peace talks fail. Security forces arrested suspected Maoists during a mass meeting and confiscated their weapons. Families of security personnel killed during the insurgency are decrying the lack of assistance promised by the GON. End Summary.

GON AND MAOISTS TO MEET INFORMALLY

2. According to local press reports, Government of Nepal (GON) representatives and Maoist leaders will meet informally on February 24. According to one of the facilitators, the parties will meet at an undisclosed location to discuss and finalize a code of conduct for the ceasefire. Representatives from both sides, including Narayan Singh Pun, Minister for Physical Planning and Works, and possibly Dr. Baburam Bhattari, the number two leader of the Maoists, reportedly will be present.

3. Krishna Pahadi, Chairperson of the Human Rights and Peace Society (HURPES), urged the parties to ensure successful dialogue, declaring that Nepal would be ridiculed by the international community if the talks failed again. Pradeep Gywali, Central Committee Member of the Communist Part of Nepal-United Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), also warned of trouble if the peace talks failed again, saying that the country should be prepared for dire consequences.

MAOISTS STEP UP MEETINGS WITH POLITICAL LEADERS

4. Krishna Bahadur Mahara and Dinnath Sharma, senior insurgent leaders and members of the Maoist negotiating team, met with Girija Prasad Koirala, President of the Nepali Congress (NC) on February 18. During the meeting, Maoist leaders claimed that they are a pro-people party and committed to democracy. They also denied that they had reached any secret agreements with King Gyanendra, and promised that all ceasefire developments would be made public.

5. Maoist negotiators also met with Narayan Man Bijukchhe, Chairman of the Nepal Workers and Peasants' Party (NWPP), during which Bijukchhe reportedly urged the Maoists to clarify their agenda and approach the peace talks responsibly.

6. Madhav Kumar Nepal, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), also met with Mahara and Sharma. Nepal told the local press that the Maoist negotiators requested help in creating an atmosphere for peace talks and that they were committed to solving the process through dialogue. Mahara has previously expressed concern that the GON still has not announced its negotiating team and accused the GON of failing to create a conducive

atmosphere for peace talks.

MAOISTS ARRESTED

17. Nineteen Maoists, including Central Committee Member, Rabindra Shrestha, reportedly were rearrested shortly after being released from Central and Bhadra Jails in Kathmandu on February 19. The prisoners then started chanting anti-government slogans, and Maoist leaders warned that the "irresponsible behavior" of the police could jeopardize the ceasefire.

18. On February 18, security forces conducted a search operation during a mass meeting organized by Maoists in Kanchanpur District in the Far Western Terai and reportedly arrested fifteen insurgents. The security forces also confiscated khukuris, pistols, socket bombs and grenades.

PUN PROMISES CODE OF CONDUCT SOON

19. Narayan Singh Pun, the government-appointed coordinator of the peace talks, has promised a code of conduct for the ceasefire will be established soon. Minister Pun and Maoist leaders reportedly are working together to finalize a draft, which will be made public upon its completion.

WAR CRIME TRIBUNALS POSSIBLE

10. Narayan Singh Pun proclaimed that those who had committed atrocities in dealing with Maoists and civilians would face war crime tribunals when the peace process was completed. Pun made the promise while speaking to family members of those who have disappeared during the insurgency. However, when asked what type of punishment the Maoists would face for their crimes, Pun would not answer.

CONFLICTING STORIES SURROUND DEATH OF SIBLINGS

11. Two children, ages 7 and 12, were killed at a primary school in northwestern Baglung District. There are conflicting accounts of how they died. According to some witnesses, 200 insurgents arrived at the school to conduct training sessions in firing weapons. A Maoist leader said the children were killed when the guns went off accidentally, due to the carelessness of the children. Another Maoist leader reportedly said the guns went off as a result of a faulty trigger. However, other witnesses said the Maoists stormed into the school and began firing. Local villagers said the killings were politically motivated. Maoists reportedly have apologized to the parents of the dead children.

12. According to press accounts, the insurgents executed one of their own unit commanders for allegedly raping a girl in Gorkha District. The girl's family had given shelter to the commander.

13. Maoist cadres reportedly are looting cash and other valuables from residents in central Parbat District. The insurgents have taken almost four thousand dollars from the villagers, claiming it as donations.

PRACHANDA ORDERS HALT TO EXTORTION

14. Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal, aka Prachanda, has allegedly ordered his followers to stop extorting money, and to accept only voluntary donations. According to a statement issued by Prachanda, the order was issued so the "real" perpetrators of the extortion attempts could be exposed. Prachanda accused "foreign reactionaries" of false propaganda meant to disrupt the peace process and place false blame on the Maoists. However, the Maoist leader also asserted that his party was committed to curbing any activity that might disturb the peace process.

MASS MEETINGS CONTINUE

15. Maoists continued to organize mass meetings and threatened to break the ceasefire if security personnel insist on intervening and arresting their cadres. District level Maoist leaders, speaking at the meetings in eastern Dolakha District, also said that they would defy any deals secretly made with the palace. Maoists also held a mass

SIPDIS

meeting in southern Bara District, declaring that they would quickly raise arms again if the peace talks failed. Over 500 people, including women and children, attended the meeting.

16. Chandra Budhamagar, Chief of the Maoist People's Joint Action Committee, said the GON had demonstrated a lack of seriousness about the peace talks and condemned the intense police activities in Baglung District, which allegedly include unnecessary searches, arrests and detentions.

VICTIM'S FAMILIES CRITICIZE GOVERNMENT'S APATHY

17. Family members of security personnel killed during the insurgency are claiming that the GON has not fulfilled promises of assistance, including free education for the children of those killed. The GON allegedly has been slow to deliver relief packages, and many of the victims' families are still being billed for tuition fees.

MALINOWSKI